

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for the prevention or treatment of a neurodegenerative condition comprising administering peripherally to said mammal an effective amount of EPO, an EPO receptor activity modulator, or an EPO-activated receptor modulator, for the protection of an excitable tissue.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein said condition is the result of age-related loss of cognitive function, cerebral palsy, neurodegenerative disease, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, Leigh disease, AIDS dementia, memory loss, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, alcoholism, mood disorder, anxiety disorder, attention deficit disorder, autism, Creutzfeld-Jakob disease, brain or spinal cord trauma, glaucoma, retinal ischemia, or retinal trauma.

3. The method of Claim 1 wherein said excitable tissue is central nervous system tissue or peripheral nervous system tissue.

4. The method of Claim 1 wherein said administration comprises oral, topical, intraluminal or by inhalation or parenteral administration.

5. The method of Claim 4 wherein said parenteral administration is intravenous, intraarterial, subcutaneous, intramuscular, intraperitoneal, submucosal or intradermal.

6. The method of Claim 1 wherein said administration is acute or chronic.

7. The method of Claim 1 wherein said EPO is nonerythropoietic.

8. The method of Claim 1 wherein said EPO is administered at a dose greater than the dose necessary to maximally stimulate erythropoiesis.

9. The method of Claim 1 wherein said EPO is erythropoietin, an erythropoietin analog, an erythropoietin mimetic, an erythropoietin fragment, a hybrid erythropoietin molecule, an erythropoietin receptor-binding molecule, an erythropoietin agonist, a renal erythropoietin, a brain erythropoietin, an oligomer thereof, a multimer thereof, a mutein thereof, a congener thereof, a naturally-occurring form thereof, a synthetic form thereof, a recombinant form thereof, or a combination thereof.

10. The method of Claim 9 wherein said EPO receptor-binding molecule is an antibody to the erythropoietin receptor.

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